

LINC, PBLA and the CLB

This Migration Matters Info Sheet provides a practical overview of the components of the LINC program in BC for prospective teachers, settlement staff and organizations wanting to liaise with and support LINC programming. This info sheet supports LINC teacher trainers and PBLA lead teachers in introducing brand new teachers to the many components and resources available to support LINC delivery.

Introduction

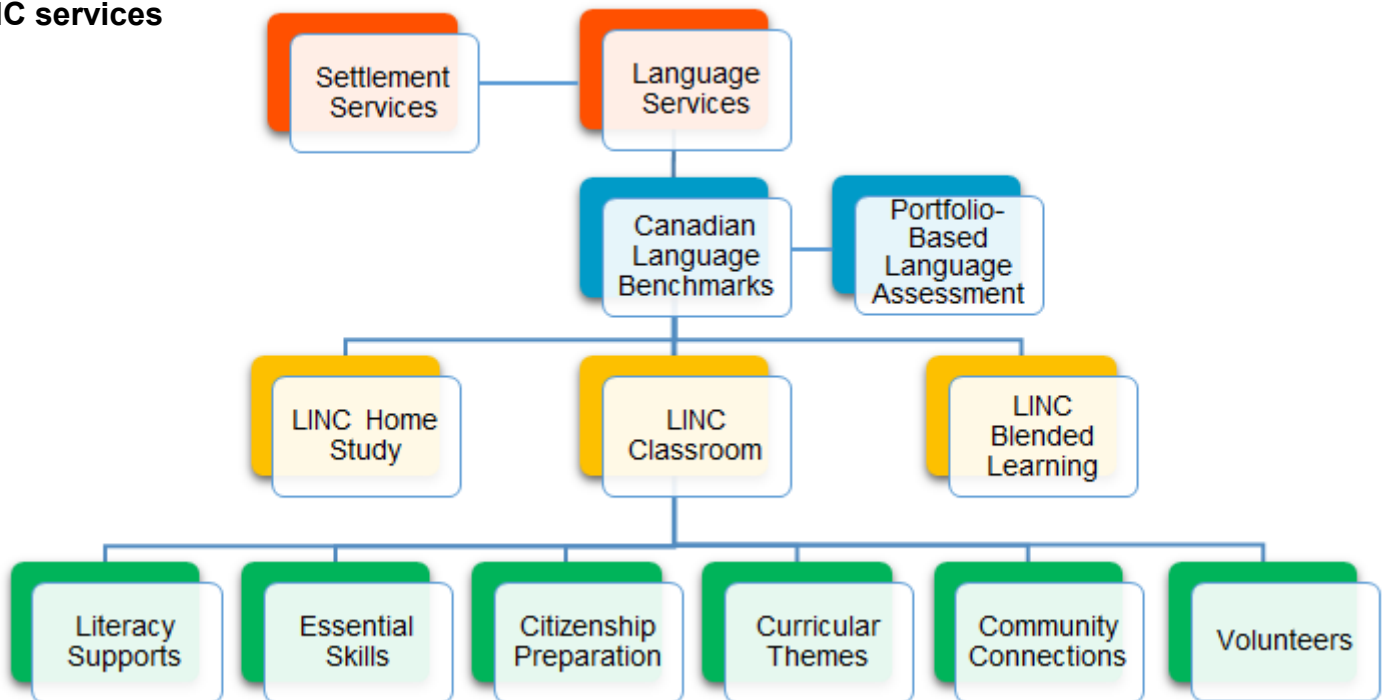
Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) was established in 1992 by the federal government to facilitate the social, cultural and economic integration of immigrants and refugees into Canada.¹ The program endeavours to train the same proportion of women and men as is reflected in the local immigrant population.²

Funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), language Service Providing Organizations (SPO) may offer on-site childminding services and providers may cover transportation to and from classes to support access to language learning.³ In British Columbia, when funded provincially, the program was called English Language Services for Adults (ELSA). It has been funded directly by IRCC as “LINC” since 2014.⁴ Permanent Residents, protected persons and convention refugees are eligible for LINC.⁵

Canadian Language Benchmarks

The Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) standard is a descriptive scale of language ability in English as an Additional Language (EAL) written as 12 benchmarks or reference points along a continuum from basic to advanced.⁶ A CLB Placement Test (CLBPT) administered in an IRCC funded assessment centre or by a remote assessor, places the learner on the CLB scale of communicative competence in listening, speaking, reading and writing. Learners then focus on acquiring the competencies of the next CLB level guided by a list of Can Do Statements.⁷ A new CLB Literacy Placement Tool is expected to aid in the placement of low literacy level learners.⁸ Once placed on the CLB scale, the learner works towards that benchmark in either a LINC classroom, through blended learning (classroom and online) or by correspondence in a LINC Home Study program (LHS), if unable to attend classroom-based language training.⁹

LINC services



References

- ^{1,2,5} IRCC (2004). [Evaluation of the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada \(LINC\) Program](#)
- ³ IRCC (2017). [Language classes funded by the Government of Canada.](#)
- ⁴ The Vancouver Sun (2014). [More than 70 ESL teachers likely to lose jobs at Vancouver Community College](#)
- ^{6,7} IRCC (2014). [National Language Placement and Progression Guidelines](#)
- ⁸ Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks (2017). [March 2018 Inside Language](#)
- ⁹ Centre for Education & Training (2018). [LEAD | LINC Home Study: How to Register](#)

Language instruction for newcomers

The LINC classroom instructor utilizes **Portfolio-Based Language Assessment (PBLA)** to support learning with a national, standardized progression through the benchmarks. In addition to PBLA, instructors weave various other elements into classes such as literacy supports for those with limited schooling, the 9 workplace Essential Skills, employment supports, community connections (outings and guest speakers), volunteers as well as LINC settlement and integration themes such as *Health & Safety* and *Banking & Finance*.¹⁰ Citizenship preparation is another element of LINC and those applying for Canadian citizenship require a minimum of CLB 4 in speaking and listening.

The benchmark levels are organized into stages of language ability, Literacy, Stage I (CLB 1-4), Stage II (CLB 5-8) and Stage III (CLB 9-12). There is a corresponding classroom binder, also known as the *Language Companion* for Literacy and Stages I & II.¹¹ Some service providers in British Columbia offer focused LINC courses for Literacy and/or Employment.

Language assessment

Portfolio-Based Language Assessment (PBLA) has been phased into LINC programming nationally and now replaces standardized exit testing.¹² PBLA is a teacher-driven approach to **Assessment for Learning (AfL)** and incorporates a learner portfolio, the *Language Companion*, for filing both formative (ongoing) and summative (final) assessments.¹³ Guided by the CLB principles of real-world, task-based and learner-centered instruction, LINC teachers support the collection of 8-12 artefacts in each skill (listening, speaking, reading and writing).

Becoming a LINC instructor



References

¹⁰ Edmonton Catholic School District LINC Program (2017). [CLB Curriculum Guidelines 1-6](#)

¹¹ Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks (2012). [CLB Support Kit](#)

¹² IRCC (2013). [Settlement Program — Introducing Portfolio-Based Language Assessment as a Standard Feature of LINC and CLIC](#)

^{13, 14} Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks. (2017). [PBLA Emerging Practice Guidelines](#)

Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks resources

- [E-learning Portal CLB Bootcamp](#); other training courses
- [PBLA Emerging Practice Guidelines](#)
- [Resources • Expertise](#) on CLBs, adult literacy learners, for regulatory bodies, assessors, volunteers, etcetera

Instructional & planning supports

- [Tutela: Online Community for ESL/EFL professionals](#)
- [LearnIT2Teach for Blended Learning](#)
- [Discover Canada Citizenship Guide](#)
- [CLB / Essential Skills in the Workplace](#)
- [WorkBC and Career Paths](#)
- [#CdnELTchat was #LINCchat on Twitter](#)
- [Instructor Tools for PBLA and ESL Literacy](#)
- [CLB, LINC and PBLA for Canadian Teachers \(\\$\)](#)

Additional resources

- [BC TEAL • Provincial Teachers' Association](#)
- [LISTN Resources for Teachers - archived](#)
- [WelcomeBC • Videos and Guides](#)
- [AMSSA's Settlement Net Language Resources](#)
- [Info Sheet: English Language Training for Refugees](#)

Portfolio artefacts can include a combination of skill-using and assessment tasks but do not include skill-building tasks.¹⁴ Needs assessment, goal setting, self-assessment and ongoing feedback are all elements of the PBLA process. When learners collect enough assessment task samples, their portfolio may be reviewed and when CLB competencies are demonstrated in each skill, a Learner Progress Report is issued by the service provider.